Tells the Facts and Names the Names

CounterPunch

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Those New Clean Air Rules:

You Really Think Bill Hung Tough?

Portrayed by the press as an instance of sturdy White House refusal to back down on the new air pollution regulations, the actual story of Clinton and Gore's handling of the new EPA standards for ozone and soot is a familiar one: smoke, mirrors and collapse in the face of pressure from the oil and utilities industries, and from big cities that would have felt the bite of the proposed standards most sharply: Detroit, Chicago and Los Angeles.

In early June, Carol Browner, the EPA's director, was still holding to a courageous stand after six months of furious abuse from the industry coalition, leaked insults from the OMB, and disparaging comments from the White House staff and the President's National Economic Council. Under a court order, the EPA had proposed in November new rules governing urban air pollution, establishing stricter limits for ozone (which causes smog) and for fine soot-like pollution, sometimes called particulate matter. The EPA had cited more than a hundred scientific studies linking these pollutants to asthma and premature death. EPA's proposed rules were about half as stringent as those favored by scientists with environmental groups and health organizations, such as the American Lung Association.

Two states which one might have expected to denounce the standards in fact cheered them. Both Governor Christine Whitman of New Jersey and Senator Al D'Amato of New York welcomed the rules, presumably because the necessary clean-up is already budgeted for. But Al Gore desperately needs the support of California, Michigan and Illinois in his prospective run at the White House in 2000. So the White House was particularly alert to the howls that came from these three states.

As the insults rained down on Browner, Gore remained publicly silent. But in early June the Veep's senior environmental aid, Katie McGinty, paid a call on Browner and told her that the White House wanted a 10-year delay on the imposition of any new standards. The White House was also looking for a 30 to 50 percent reduction in the proposed standard for soot and a softening of the sanctions for violations of the standards once they are in place. Browner told McGinty that in her opinion the proposed new rules were the bare minimum necessary to comply with the court order. When McGinty brought this message back to the White House, Clinton's chief of staff Erskine Bowles reportedly exclaimed, "Browner's very, very stubborn and for some reason she thinks she's got God on her side."

The environmentalists had al ready made a major strategic blunder. Rather than clamor fiercely for the maximum protection in any new standard, the big national groups had been successfully lobbied by Gore's staffers to "defend us on this one", meaning that they should stick with the government's "bare minimum" posture. But then, as Gore backslid, Browner could no longer portray herself as holding the line against the green fanatics to her left, because they had already agreed to be "moderate." So she had no political cover. The big green groups should have been belaboring Browner to crack down even further on soot and ozone, a move that would have protected an additional 20,000

(continued on p. 8)

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Our Little Secret

Not Again! (It's Those Crazy Spy/Drug Slurs)

Okay, so which spy agency smuggled drugs to raise money for terror schemes including chemical experimentation on blacks? You can take your pick, but here we're talking about South Africa. A South African agent now awaiting sentencing has admitted to smuggling on behalf of the Directorate of Covert Collections, a super-secret unit within South Africa's military intelligence apparat.

This agent and his colleagues flew drugs—cannabis, Ecstasy and Mandrax have been mentioned—into England in the nose cone of an aircraft carrying sports fans to the first Springbox rugby tour of the UK after ties were re-established in 1992. The plan was to raise money to buy arms on the international black market, as reported by David Beresford of the London *Observer* and Andrew Malone of *The Sunday Times*.

The Ecstasy and Mandrax consignments were manufactured in labs run by Dr. Wouter Basson, one of the chieftains of South Africa's chemical and biological weapons program. Basson was arrested last January, after diving into a river while attempting to escape from police arresting him for trying to sell 1,000 Ecstasy tablets. Basson is a cardiologist who has numbered former President P.W. Botha among his patients.

Basson ran a secret factory called Delta-G Scientific to make Mandrax and other drugs and a former research manager there is to testify against Basson about the international smuggling scheme. Also part of Basson's empire was Roodeplaat Research Laboratories, a military installation near Pretoria. Activities at this secret facility included the testing and manufacture of poison gas, apparently used in combat at least once in Mozambique.

Also tested at the Roodeplaat Research Labs were lethal poisons designed to leave no traces. There were efforts to develop skin pigmentation pills to change white government agents into blacks, the better to infiltrate groups. In a reprise of the smallpox blankets given to American Indians in the 19th century, infected T-shirts were to be distributed in the black townships to spread disease and infertility. Tests on baboons involved cancer-spreading drugs. An anti-riot dog weighing 200 pounds was bred from a mix of an Alsatian and a Russian wolf.

It's going to be hard to make the claim traditional in these cases that Basson was a "rogue agent" acting without state authorization. Documents found in his house were so highly classified that they were apparently on a CD-ROM that not even the military could access without clearance from the President.

Corn and Shackley

And while we're on the subject of drugs, here at *Counterpunch* we've been in receipt of a hurt note from David Corn, Washington correspondent for *The Nation*.

"In the May 16-31 issue of **CounterPunch**, I was described as "a noted dustraker who managed to write an entire book on the CIA's Ted Shackley without ever tripping over so much as a bag of heroin. I do appreciate the first four words of that identification. But the rest indicates that **CounterPunch** did not do its research. On pages 147 to 151 of *Blond Ghost: Ted Shackley and the CIA's Crusades* I report that when Shackley was CIA chief of station in Laos, the Agency purposefully ignored drug-dealing conducted by US assets and allies. Allow me to quote: `Shackley and his Agency knowingly supported and associated with persons involved in the opium and heroin trades' (p. 150). And it would have been nice if **CounterPunch**, in decrying my `popgun attack' on the *San Jose Mercury News* contra crack series, had noted that this `attack' also assailed the mainstream media for having taken a powder on the contra drug story."

To fill his five pages on the drug trade in Laos, David Corn liberally lifts some spicy anecdotes from Alfred McCoy's *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* and Leslie and Andrew Cockburn's film for *Frontline, Drugs, Guns and the CIA*. Tony Po, then a senior CIA officer in Laos, states on camera in the Cockburns' film that CIA-owned planes flew Vang Pao's heroin. Corn notes this but then reaches the astonishing conclusion that there is little evidence that the CIA or General Vang Pao, the CIA's hand-picked military leader for the Meo troops, was engaged in drug trafficking.

The opium trade was central to the CIA's operations in Laos during Shackley's tenure there and Vang Pao was at the heart of that trade, directing its operations, pocketing its substantial profits. It's all in the numbers. The CIA was spending about $30 million a year to run operations that cost closer to $1 billion a year. Some of this money came from AID and the Department of Defense. A large chunk derived from the opium trade. And Shackley not only knew, but facilitated it, protected it and encouraged it. Corn's analysis doesn't venture much beyond the 1972 report on the topic by the CIA's Inspector General, prompted by revelations that as

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many as 60,000 US troops in Vietnam were using heroin coming from Laos and Burma. The whitewash report concluded that the CIA had merely turned a blind eye to the traditional customs of some Meo leaders. This has become the conventional wisdom of the mainstream press. In the end, *Blond Ghost* is a peculiarly sympathetic account of a mastermind of state-sponsored terrorism. Corn uses harsher language to denounce CIA critics than the murderous intrigues of Shackley and his colleagues. Not so different than the corporate press, after all.

THE AITKEN AFFAIR

London has been consumed with the Aitken scandal, which illustrates the fatal intertwining of hubris, greed, arms and Saudi money. Jonathan Aitken is the grand-nephew of a famous figure in the history of the British press, Lord Beaverbrook, a Canadian-born news magnate and political force in the earlier part of the century. Socially and politically well connected, young Jonathan made his way in the world, first as a journalist and then as a conservative member of Parliament for the bleak constituency of Thanet, in south-east England. In the Thatcher years Aitken did not advance to ministerial rank, having been imprudent enough to have toyed with and then broken the heart of Margaret Thatcher's daughter, Carol. But with the arrival at No. 10 Downing Street of John Major, Aitken became minister for defense procurement.

Many years earlier Aitken had struck up a most productive friendship with Said Ayas, a medical student from Lebanon who became private secretary to Mohammed bin Fahd, the most prominent son of King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and thus a man with plenty of money to throw around. Aitken got reservoirs of cash through the 1970s and 1980s for various ventures, including a bank which failed and the Inglewood Health Hydro in Berkshire, an establishment where Saudis could cavort with women procured by Aitken, who himself matched the usual upper-class English character profile with his keen interest in whips and restraining devices.

In the money-soaked world of Saudi arms deals the biggest of plums so far as the British were concerned was the Yamamah contract, a billion-pound deal involving the sale of Tornado aircraft. In 1993 Aitken paid a fateful visit to the Ritz hotel in Paris, taking up residence in room 526. Directly above his head, in room 626, was his friend and business associate, Said Ayas. The Yamamah deal was the subject of their parleys, and thus it was unfortunate for Aitken, a government minister, doing personal business with Prince Mohammed's secretary, that his hotel bill—somewhat over $4,000 for the brief visit—was paid for by Said Ayas.

In its malodorous twilight John Major's government became enmired in one malodorous scandal after another,

Aitken matched the usual upper-class English character profile with his keen interest in whips and restraining devices.

not least of which was Aitken's Saudi-paid session in the Ritz, about which the London *Guardian* published a detailed story, also broadcast by the TV documentary program World In Action.

Aitken sued for libel. His story was that his Yugoslav-born wife Lolicia (for whom he had thrown over Ms. Thatcher) had been flying with their daughter to Geneva that weekend to look at a school, had then trundled on to Paris to pay for her husband's room in cash before flying straight back to London. But meanwhile, Aitken continued, Said Ayas had mistakenly paid for his room but when he, Aitken, discovered this a few months later he reimbursed Ayas.

Aitken spent prodigious amounts—at least two million pounds sterling on his libel suit—and the newspaper and TV company made an offer to settle out of court. Flushed with hubris, Aitken declined a deal and pressed on.

Last month the roof finally fell in. The defendants extracted from British Airways flight manifests showing that Lolicia Aitken and daughter had flown to Geneva and returned thence directly to London. Simultaneously Lolicia announced that she had been implored by Aitken to perjure herself, along with her daughter, in court about the imaginary trip to Paris, but that she was unwilling to do so and was leaving him. Aitken has gone to ground.

NIKE & ANDREW YOUNG: A SUPER FIT

Nike has been running dvertisements in newspapers across the country bragging that Andrew Young has endorsed its labor practices in Indonesia and Vietnam. We reported Nike's hiring of Young a few issues back and warned that the former UN ambassador could hardly be deemed an independent actor since he is involved in a joint venture with the Lippo Group—the firm at the heart of the Donorgate scandal—in Indonesia. And besides Young's humanitarian conscience is notoriously elastic, as those remembering his invitation to Atlanta of Guatemalan torturers will no doubt recall.

Young issued a 75-page report following his trip to Asia in which he said that he found "clean, organized" factories and no "systematic abuse or mistreatment of workers".

Nike plant managers knew in advance that Young was coming and his tour was carefully scripted, greatly reducing the possibility that he would come upon any sign of labor strife. Young ignored the issue of salaries paid by Nike—20 cents per hour in Vietnam and slightly higher in Indonesia—in preparing his report. A day after Young issued his report, Nike announced even better news: its annual profits for 1996 were a record smashing $796 million. Crime does pay.

COVER BOY

A sometime aide to Yasir Arafat enjoys telling of their visit to Baghdad in the period between Saddam Hussein's seizure of Kuwait, and the actual war. "How are they writing about me in the Western press?" Saddam asked.

"Well, Mr. President, you have been on the cover of *Time*."

"Me? The cover of *Time*?" Do you have a copy?" Saddam barked excitedly. The aide said he thought he did, back at the hotel. He was at once dispatched with full security escort to retrieve it. Saddam seized the magazine and was still—when Arafat and aide finally departed—raptly gazing at his picture. ■

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Emerging Markets Redux

Looking for the Next Mexico

In late 1994, **CounterPunch** ran a story on "emerging markets"—Wall Street-ese for stock and bond investments in Third World economies—which predicted that Mexico's economic "boom" would soon come to an end as it was built on a very shaky foundation of foreign money. Two weeks later the peso collapsed, Mexico's economy went down the drain and a worldwide panic erupted about the dangers of a global financial disaster.

Today, emerging markets are back and hotter than ever. In late June, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an 18-page special report on "Global Investing" which said that the number of foreign stock mutual funds had grown from about 20 in 1987 to more than 400 today. During the past year alone, Third World governments and companies have marketed $74 billion in bonds and billions more has flowed into stock markets in underdeveloped countries.

Despite all the hoopla, emerging markets are as unstable as ever. After the peso collapsed, foreign investors shifted money from Latin America to Asia, driving up stocks across the region. Thailand was a prime beneficiary and it soon was labeled by the smart money as the next "boom" market. Now Thailand is in the midst of a Mexico-like meltdown. The country's stock market index is down from 1,300 in mid-1996 to about 550 today. The economy is foundering and there is fear of a military coup.

What keeps the emerging markets merry-go-round turning is that the U.S. and other Western nations have socialized the risks to big money, as best exemplified by the Clinton administration's $50 billion bail-out of Mexico following the peso's collapse. "The world's central bankers have made clear that they will not tolerate a generalized financial panic," Doug Henwood, author of the new book *Wall Street*, says. "That makes foreign investors feel more confident about entering into these risky markets."

We've been gathering information about the brave new world of emerging markets. Some of it was obtained by a **CounterPunch** agent who called several brokers and claimed that he had recently come into a large chunk of money. No precise amount was given but it was demurely suggested that said money reached into seven digit figures.

While brokers peddle emerging markets as essential to the smart investors' portfolio, they downplay the fact that such investments are hugely volatile. A mild exception was Morgan Stanley, which stated in a mutual fund prospectus it sent our agent that "because the fund takes big risks, it's not surprising that performance is sometimes horrendous."

One reason for the volatility is that foreign money drives the markets up, but if investors decide to pull out the whole market can come down fast. "The least reliable guide to choosing an emerging market is the fact that it has been doing well recently," says *Emerging Markets Analyst*, a newsletter sent along by a Canadian consulting firm. "Last year's best performer is often this year's worst performer."

Turkey—where most stocks are held for one day or less—is a prime example. The market there fell by 42 percent in both 1991 and 1992, rose by 213 percent in 1993, then fell by 43 percent in 1994. "Emerging markets are no stronger now than they were prior to the peso crisis," says Walker Todd, a former official at the Federal Reserve. "Many markets are overvalued and are rising only because of speculation."

Brokers generally shy away from discussion of a phenomenon common to emerging markets: stock markets tend to go up as living standards and political freedoms go down. Stocks in Argentina have been climbing along with the unemployment rate, which now stands at an all time high of 20 percent in major cities. In Nigeria stocks have soared by about 30 percent during the past three years. That coincides with a period of intensifying political repression, with the military seeking to wipe out any political opposition. The military's 1995 execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other human rights activists heightened "political stability", which only served to push stocks higher (see sidebar).

Stock market money is highly speculative and little of it flows into produc-

Political Stability: More Precious Than Gold

"Political stability is a virtue that is craved by investors with the deepest of pockets," the *New York Times* declared forthrightly in a recent story in its business pages. The article stated that Unocal had suffered a dreadful blow when the fundamentalist Taliban—which had seemed close to taking full control of Afghanistan, where the company is hoping to build a $2 billion natural gas pipeline —suffered a series of military defeats. "At least for a few hours a lot of people were hopeful, "a despondent U.S. official told the *Times*. "If you have one government controlling virtually all the country, both commercial banks and international financial institutions would have been likely to get involved. Now it's back to square one."

An equally direct statement about business concern for democracy was made not long ago by James Castle, vice president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Jakarta and head of a consulting group that advises businesses operating in Indonesia. In one of his presentations Castle told his audience, "The military will remain the ultimate arbiter for the next decade. It will continue to control the process of presidential succession, parliament and provincial governments. The dominant role of the military is generally acceptable intellectually and emotionally to the vast majority of all Indonesian groups and communities. Evaluation of particular strategies and tactics are open to criticism, but its role as the decisive player is considered right and proper at this historical juncture." ■

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tive investment. The prime beneficiaries are foreign investors and the local elite. One of Argentina's leading brokers was known to send a private jet to Buenos Aires to pick up pizzas for his house guests at a beach resort in Uruguay.

The "Nike indicator", an index created by an investment firm called Jardine Fleming Securities, nicely illustrates the political economy of emerging markets. In looking for hot spots to invest, Jardine Fleming takes the lead from Nike, which moves to countries that are generally authoritarian and extremely pro-business. Using Nike as a guidepost, Jardine is now urging investors to look at opportunities in Vietnam, where workers make 20 cents per hour, the government strictly controls unions and the tennis shoe maker now produces a large percentage of its merchandise.

An Argentine broker sent his jet to Buenos Aires to pick up pizzas for his beach party in Uruguay.

If wages and social conditions improve, foreign investors head for the exits. As a broker from Lehman Brothers explains, "The big problem with a place like Korea, that's had a fantastic economy for the past fifteen years, is that all of a sudden labor is catching up and they're saying, 'You know what, I want a decent standard of living.' That tends to be a problem." As a result of this "problem", stocks in Korea have fallen by 12 percent during the past three years.

A major factor behind the swooning stock market in Thailand—where wages average about $1 per hour —is that foreign companies located there have increasingly shifted production to China, Vietnam, Indonesia and other countries where labor rates are even cheaper. A brochure sent to us by Morgan Stanley lists low wages as a top reason to invest in Third World countries. The brochure maps out average pay around the globe. Germany tops the list at $25.56 per hour, a figure that falls to $5.38 an hour in Singapore, and down to 28 cents per hour in the investors' paradise of Indonesia. ■

Gulf War Verdict At Last

The long awaited and recently de-classified GAO report "Operation Desert Storm: Evaluation of the Air Campaign", provides an instructive primer to the real performance of the vaunted "high tech" weaponry deployed by the Air Force. As might be expected, most of the claims made by arms manufacturers and their servants in the Pentagon are conclusively proven to be lies.

A Friend of **CounterPunch** has provided a useful guide to the attempts by the air force to classify, on the grounds of "national security", almost all data supporting the GAO's contention that the expensive weapons either didn't work or worked no better than the low-tech cheap alternatives deployed against Saddam.

On page 144 of the report the authors lay out a chart comparing manufacturers' claims with reality. Of the F-16, General Dynamics stated that "No matter what the mission, air to air, air to ground. No matter what the weather, day or night. The F-16 is the premier dogfighter." In the next column, the report soberly notes that "The F-16's delivery of precision air to ground munitions, such as Maverick, was impaired, and sometimes made impossible by clouds, haze, humidity, smoke and dust. Only less accurate unguided munitions could be employed in adverse weather using radar." In other words, the weather, not to mention clouds, haze, humidity and dust mattered a lot, thus negating the alleged advantages of the Maverick missiles ($100,000 each).

The Air Force attempted to classify this unwelcome observation, as they did the whole of the rest of the chart reminding readers that the A-6 bomber could not hit anything if the weather was anything less than crystal clear; that the F-117 Stealth plane hit not 80 percent of its targets but something nearer 40 percent; that the Stealth was not, as claimed, the only plane able to attack heavily defended parts of Baghdad; that the Stealth was the only plane to achieve surprise – it was not and did not; that the Tomahawk Cruise missiles were "incredibly accurate" – far from it; that the F-15E bomber was able to bomb using precision-guided wizardry in all weathers and conditions – again a lie. One of the falsehoods, a boast by Martin Marietta that the LANTIRN target designator could "locate and attack targets at night and under conditions of poor visibility" (not true) was contained in a 10-K Report to the SEC, which should lay the company open to serious charges of filing false information.

All these highly pertinent corrections were to be forever concealed from the prying eyes of the voters and taxpayers. They were only included in the report because of a year of unremitting effort by Sen. David Pryor and Rep. John Dingell. The latter is frequently muzzled by the efforts of his wife to achieve social prominence in Washington, an enterprise she feels is hampered by her husband's propensity to embarrass large corporations. This time he seems to have gotten away with it and most of the report was declassified.

Other than some scattered US press coverage, the implications of the report will almost certainly be ignored. They are momentous. The arms-buying strategy of the administration, uncritically endorsed by Congress (apart from some inter-porcine bickering on how to divide up the spoils) is entirely based on the alleged merits of high tech stealth and precision-guided bombing as allegedly demonstrated in the Gulf War. The evidence is in. The billion-dollar equipment worked badly, not at all, or, at the very least, no better than whiskered legacies of the now moribund reform lobby such as the A-10 attack plane.

The A-10 performed so embarrassingly well that the Air Force deleted much of the relevant data on its performance, lest it cast a shadow on the beloved F- 117 stealth and other extravagances. That problem is being definitively dealt with by phasing the A-10 entirely out of service. Hold on Saddam. Relief is at hand! ■

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Good Guys in Green—Part III

With this installment we conclude **CounterPunch**'s series on worthy green groups which deserve support and money. So far we have profiled some exceptional organizations toiling away on issues of environmental justice, wilderness protection, toxics, energy, forests, mining and native issues. Now we turn to those working on international issues, those representing whistleblowers and to the delicate subject of eco-lawyers.

It speaks volumes about the calcified condition of the mainstream greens that David Brower remains the most radical, visionary and humane leader of the US environmental movement. Brower was fired from the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth because of his uncompromising positions, but went on to found, **Earth Island Institute.** Earth Island is a collection of grassroots organizers who are tackling highly contentious international matters, such as logging in Siberia, hunting of grizzlies in Canada, renegade whaling by the Japanese and Norwegians and the slaughter of sea turtles by industrial shrimpers. Most recently, Earth Island is leading the fight to preserve US dolphin protection laws now under assault in Congress. In the process, executive director Dave Phillips and his troops have taken on the US State Department, Don Young, Mexican drug cartels, Al Gore and Greenpeace. (Earth Island Institute, 300 Broadway Street Suite #28, San Francisco, CA 94133-3312. Phone: 415/788-3666)

Just across the Bay in Brower's hometown of Berkeley resides a feisty group called the **International Rivers Network.** International Rivers' mission is to protect rivers and the people who live near them from the depredations of large-scale development projects such as logging concessions, strip mining and hydroelectric dams—where ethnocide and ecological destruction often intersect.

One of International Rivers' main projects the last few years has been an attack on China's Three Gorges Dam, touted by Li Peng as the largest construction project since the erection of the pyramids. It is certainly the biggest and one of the most destructive dams ever envisioned: 350 of miles of river would be impounded, dozens of endangered species imperiled, and 1.3 million Chinese peasants forcibly relocated. Projects of this scale are made possible only by a flood of cash from institutions such as the World Bank and the Export-Import Bank.

International Rivers knew it would be futile to try to influence the Chinese government directly, so the Network's Juliette Majot and Owen Lammers unleashed an untiring assault on the two banks. The strategy paid off. Both banks backed out and now the massive project appears to be hopelessly stalled. (International Rivers Network, 1847 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, CA 94703. Phone: 510/848-1008)

The early 1970s saw the rise of a new kind of environmental group: the litigation shop, typified by the Environmental Defense Fund and NRDC. These groups constrained themselves to challenges of the actions of the federal bureaucracy, never venturing to sue corporate polluters directly. Another feature of these law firms was that they didn't represent clients, but chose cases as required their own legal and political agenda. By the 1980s, EDF and NRDC had been largely transformed into high-priced stables for policy wonks and lobbyists who never got near to the federal courthouse.

The litigation duties for the national greens had been largely farmed out to the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, which scored some impressive legal victories in the late 1980s. But in 1991 SCLDF's president and founder, Frederick Sutherland, died. Then Bill Clinton came into power. Under new leadership, SCLDF began to mimic the politically cautious demeanor of its colleagues, an approach that reached its climax in 1993 when at the request of the Clinton administration SCLDF handed back the hard-won injunction against logging in spotted owl habitat in the Pacific Northwest.

The void left by SCLDF, NRDC and EDF has been filled by dozens of aggressive environmental litigators. In northern California, Sharon Duggan and Bill Verick at the **Pacific Justice Center** have brought lawsuits against chemical-agriculture companies, pesticide firms, and timber giants such as Louisiana-Pacific and Maxxam. Most recently Duggan, representing Californians Against Toxics, secured a major victory by convincing a federal judge that the Clinton administration's plan to ease rules governing the import of logs from Siberia, Mexico, Chile and New Zealand violated several environmental laws. The ruling comes as a huge

Adieu Cousteau

There were always stories that Jacques Cousteau was in some sort of relationship with the French security agencies. Given his navy background and the opportunities his explorations offered, it would not have been surprising. In 1987 he conducted a survey of the French atoll Muraroa, where nuclear testing was to be resumed. After a brief inspection, with no collection of samples from below the sea bed, he filed a tranquil assessment to the effect that "the risks of radioactive contamination in the short and medium term are negligible".

Cousteau constantly had to raise money to finance the *Calypso*'s journeys and this often put him in conflicted situations. In the early 1960s he accepted a contract with Pechiney, the huge French metals company, to site a deep water waste pipe from one of its operations. Cousteau eventually supervised the laying of two pipes off Marseilles and later claimed all was going well. By 1983 some 40 million tons of bauxite dust had been pumped into the sea from those pipes. A final irony is that the tropical algae *Caulerpa taxifolia* may have escaped from Cousteau's Monaco aquarium and spread along the French, Italian and Spanish coasts, highly toxic and wiping out the submarine flora that Cousteau so admired in that first dive in the 1940s. ■

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blow to International Paper, Weyerhaeuser and Rayonier which are beginning to shift many of their logging operations overseas and importing the lumber back to the states. (Pacific Justice Center, Redway CA,. Phone 800/4-1-Planet)

The University of Denver Law School is the home of **EarthLaw**, a legal clinic founded by Mark Hughes, a disgruntled former SCLDF litigator. In just three years, EarthLaw has become the premier law firm in the West working on wildlife and federal lands issues. Among its more impressive triumphs: a federal court ruling halting logging on 4.5 million acres of old-growth forest in Arizona and New Mexico; a federal court decision ruling that Congress's attempt in 1995 to prevent the listing of new plants and animals under the Endangered Species Act was unconstitutional. They won the first lawsuit brought against the US under NAFTA, a complaint which accused Ft. Huachuca, the Army's military intelligence facility, of degrading the last wild river in the Southwest, the San Pedro. (EarthLaw, University of Denver, Foote Hall, 7150 Montview Blvd., Denver, CO 80220. Phone: 303/871-6996)

The federal government can be a dangerous place to work for people with environmental leanings. Supervisors and colleagues intimidate and muzzle potential whistleblowers. For years, environmental whistleblowers in the government had no place to turn and were forced to suffer demotions, relocations and firings. One of the most prominent of these heroes in the 1990s has been Jeff DeBonis. A Forest Service timber sale planner in Oregon DeBonis became disgusted with his job, leaked incriminating documents showing violations of environmental laws to the press, and challenged the Chief of the Forest Service to resign. DeBonis quickly became a pariah and many colleagues who supported him lost their jobs.

In response DeBonis established **Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility**, a whistleblower advocacy group. PEER has come to the aid of whistleblowers in all part of the federal government, including EPA, Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Energy. (PEER, 810 First Street NE, Suite 680 Washington, DC 20002. Phone: 202/265-7337)

PEER works closely with the lawyers at the **Government Accountability Project**. GAP provides legal aid to whistleblowers and spends a great deal of time excavating government malfeasance. **CounterPunch** readers will remember that it was GAP which came to the assistance of Ronald Bonebrake, the young accountant who exposed the fast-flux reactor scam at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. GAP has also gone to court to challenge dangerous work conditions at other Department of Energy and Department of Defense sites. (Government Accountability Project ,1402 Third Avenue, Suite 1215 Seattle, Washington 98118. Phone: 206/292-2850)

"Adam seems more concerned about starting a Sierra Club record label with David Geffen than chasing the oil companies out of Alaska."

Not all of the environmental whistleblowers work for the federal government or industry. Some are members of environmental groups. The Sierra Club advertises itself as the most democratic of the mainstream greens. Unlike NRDC or EDF, the Sierra Club sponsors elections and ballot initiatives that give its members a small voice in policy decisions. Moreover, in attempt to rejuvenate its image, the Club recently appointed a 23-year old Brown grad, Adam Warbach, as president of its board. Warbach has shown up as a talking head on MS-NBC and MTV. Yet, one Sierra Club board member tells **CounterPunch** that "Adam seems more concerned about starting a Sierra Club record label with David Geffen than chasing the oil companies out of Alaska."

The Sierra Club has also cracked down on members who dare to voice a position that is contrary (meaning stronger) than that adopted by the Club's professional staff and conservative directors. In Montana and New York, Sierra Club chapters were stripped of their charters after supporting the Alliance for the Wild Rockies 16-million acre wilderness bill. A similar situation occured last year in Victoria, British Columbia, when a local chapter attacked the BC government's plan to only preserve 12 percent of the province's old-growth forests.

These repressive actions (and many more) sparked an internal rebellion. Disenchanted Sierra Club members formed a group called the **John Muir Sierrans,** aimed at protecting Club dissidents. They were immediately hit with a threatening legal letter claiming that the Club owned the rights to the name "John Muir" and the word "Sierrans". Unintimidated, the John Muir Sierrans, led by Chad Hanson and David Orr, pressed forward. Last year they won a decisive victory on a ballot measure making it Club policy to oppose all logging on federal forest lands. And in the most recent election the John Muir Sierrans elected three of their members to the Sierra Club board, including Hanson. (John Muir Sierrans 30 N. Raymond Ave. Suite 574, Pasadena, CA 91103. Phone 626/792-0109) ■

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(EPA Rules, contiued from p. 1)
lives a year. A forceful opposition would also have helped Browner greatly in resisting White House pressures.

Eventually Gore's silence irked some of his erstwhile green allies. Deb Callahan of the League of Conservation Voters, who worked for Gore in his 1988 campaign and who last year extolled Clinton/Gore as the greatest pro-nature team in the Republic's history, expostulated: "Not to speak up and not to influence the president is not leadership. It is a bit perplexing that he would step back from providing this leadership."

Finally, a meeting between the green groups and Gore was set up. The greens went in breathing fire and came out blowing smoke. John Adams of the Natural Resources Defense Council offered the keynote: "I know some people are angry and are upset and they want to win here [ie., on the air regulations], but I want to have a relationship based on the total récord. Gore is a good man who cares about the environment, and he is a good man to have on our side." McGinty helpfully added, "You always hurt the ones you love."

With the green guns thus self-spiked, it was up to the press to report the undercutting of Browner's regulations. The press did nothing of the sort, even though Bill Clinton showed it the signposts of the sell-out. On June 25 the President attended a conference on children's health in Nashville, set up by Tipper Gore. He allotted two paragraphs of his remarks to the EPA standards. "I approved some very strong new regulations today that will be somewhat controversial, but I think kids ought to be healthy. We think that if we have high standards protecting the environment, but were flexible on how those standards are implemented, and we give adequate time and adequate support for technology and creativity to develop, then we can protect the environment and grow the economy at the same time. Critics of the rules should read the implementation schedule. Work with us. We will find a way to do this in a way that grows the American economy."

The new White House formula permits cities to violate the smog standard more often before being penalized.

It doesn't take much to read between those lines. But no story that we've been able to locate made any such effort. The day after Clinton's announcement the fthe *Washington Post* was decorated with the headline: "Clinton Backs Tougher Clean Air Rules." The lead paragraph of the story said, "Siding with environmentalists in a dispute that split the administration, President Clinton declared his support yesterday for tough new clean air regulations aimed at clearing urban skies of smog and soot." So the enviros were stuck with the credit (read: blame) and they largely deserved it.

This was followed by a *Post* editorial which praised Clinton not only for doing the right thing, but "for doing it the right way". The *Post* didn't explain precisely what it meant by this remark, but it must have something to with the dispassionate way Clinton made Carol Browner walk the plank and then grab the headlines for himself.

The untold story is that the White House scaled back Browner's already moderate proposal on ozone by 20 percent. In a huge gift to the three big cities wooed by Gore, the White House changed the formula for how smog is measured, permitting cities to violate the standard more frequently before penalties are imposed. Moreover, in the East Clinton told EPA to be more lenient with states that had taken action to reduce acid rain. The standards for ozone won't go into effect for at least eight years.

For fine particulates, EPA was told to delay developing its standard for five years. In 2002, new standards would be unveiled and the cities would have two years to devise a strategy for dealing with pollutants and given another ten years to meet the standards.

Although the cities will be given flexibility in developing their own air pollution plans, the administration continues to push for a "cap-and-trade" approach to meeting the new standards. Under this scenario—developed by the economists at the Environmental Defense Fund for George Bush—a nationwide system of pollution credits can be bandied about on the Chicago Board of Trade where speculators can make millions on the rise and fall of cancer rates. ■

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